

WASHINGTON. D.C. – House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Ranking Member Darrell Issa (R-CA) today characterized next week’s hearing titled, “Preventing Stimulus Waste and Fraud: Who Are the Watchdogs?” an opportunity for the Administration to provide absent details regarding its commitment to monitor every dollar of stimulus spending.

“The House Oversight and Government Reform Committee will hold a hearing next week to review what proactive steps Administration officials are taking to prevent waste, fraud and abuse of stimulus funds,” Issa said. “To this point, the Administration has been strong on rhetoric, but short on details. Next week’s hearing provides the Administration with an open platform to detail how they intend to fulfill their promise of transparency.”

Yesterday afternoon, Issa sent a letter to Earl Devaney, Chair of the Recovery Act Transparency and Accountability Board, who will be participating in Thursday’s hearing, calling into question Administration guidelines released by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) that contradict the President’s promise of an “unprecedented oversight effort” of the nearly \$800 billion included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act signed into law last month.

“Full transparency requires attention to not just *what* is posted online, but also *how* the information is posted. Information about how the taxpayers’ money is distributed must be disclosed in a structured, open, and searchable format,” Issa wrote to Devaney. “Spending this massive sum of money in relatively short order presents the dangerous probability of waste, fraud, and abuse.”

Below are questions Issa’s asked Devaney to address:

1. What data will be disclosed on Recovery.gov? Will each agency publish the reports mandated by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on its own web site or will everything be centrally housed at Recovery.gov? If the information and reports are not centrally housed, will there be a central aggregator or some other way to automate accessing the various agency reports?
2. Will reports from recipients (states, cities, private entities, etc.) be in a standard format? If so, what is that standard format? What are the fields the Administration will require from recipients and make available to the public? Will the Administration direct agencies to publish the recipient reports in their entirety?
3. How deeply will the data be reported? Will there be disclosure of every transaction between every recipient, contractor, and subcontractor in the supply chain up to when the project is completed? Will the Administration require all states and/or cities to report where each dollar of taxpayer money went and what was accomplished with each project?
4. What procedures do you have in place or do you plan to put in place to enforce the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act’s requirement that contracts funded under the Act are to be awarded as fixed-price contracts through the use of competitive procedures? If you do not mandate disclosure of every transaction down to the contractor and subcontractor level, how will you be able to enforce this requirement?